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Identical letters dated 10 April 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Following my letter of 7 April 2011, I write again to express my grave concern as a result of a continued escalation in projectile attacks launched by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip against innocent Israeli civilians, posing a threat to stability in our region.

Since the appalling incident of 7 April 2011, in which two Israeli civilians were injured when the Hamas terrorist organization attacked a school bus with an anti-tank missile, terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip have fired some 131 projectiles, including 12 Grad missiles, 70 Qassam rockets, and 49 mortars, at communities in southern Israel. These attacks have included the launch of Grad missiles at major population centres, such as the cities of Ashkelon and Be'er-Sheva, and caused significant damage to numerous civilian structures, including homes, a factory, water pipes and farm buildings.

These continuous attacks mark an escalation in projectile fire emanating from the Gaza Strip that has not been witnessed since the end of Operation Cast Lead in 2009. As a result of the persistent rocket fire, Israeli children were kept at home from school last week for the third time in the past month so that they could be in close proximity to bomb shelters at all times.

As I highlighted in previous letters to the Council on 7 April 2011, 23 March 2011, 19 March 2011, 23 February 2011, 9 February 2011 and 1 February 2011, such attacks emanating from the Gaza Strip constitute a clear violation of international law and must be addressed with the utmost seriousness.

Israel holds the Hamas terrorist organization, which remains in de facto control of the Gaza Strip, fully responsible for all attacks emanating from the Gaza Strip. In response to the relentless attacks against it, Israel has exercised and will continue to exercise its right to self-defence, as appropriate, and will take all necessary measures to protect its citizens.

The aforementioned attacks in which Grad missiles were used to attack the major Israeli cities of Be'er-Sheva and Ashkelon provide another clear example of the dangerous and destabilizing consequences of the continued illegal smuggling of arms into the Gaza Strip.

Israel expects the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the international community to condemn all of these attacks in very clear terms and send a firm

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message to these terrorists and their patrons, which seek to escalate conflict in our region. The Security Council and the international community must also devote much more attention to preventing the smuggling of arms into the Gaza Strip. Unfortunately, this important issue, an integral part of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), does not receive the appropriate attention that it deserves.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Meron **Reuben**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations